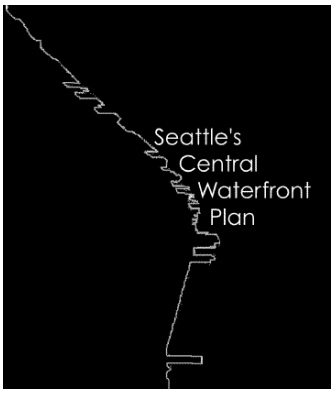


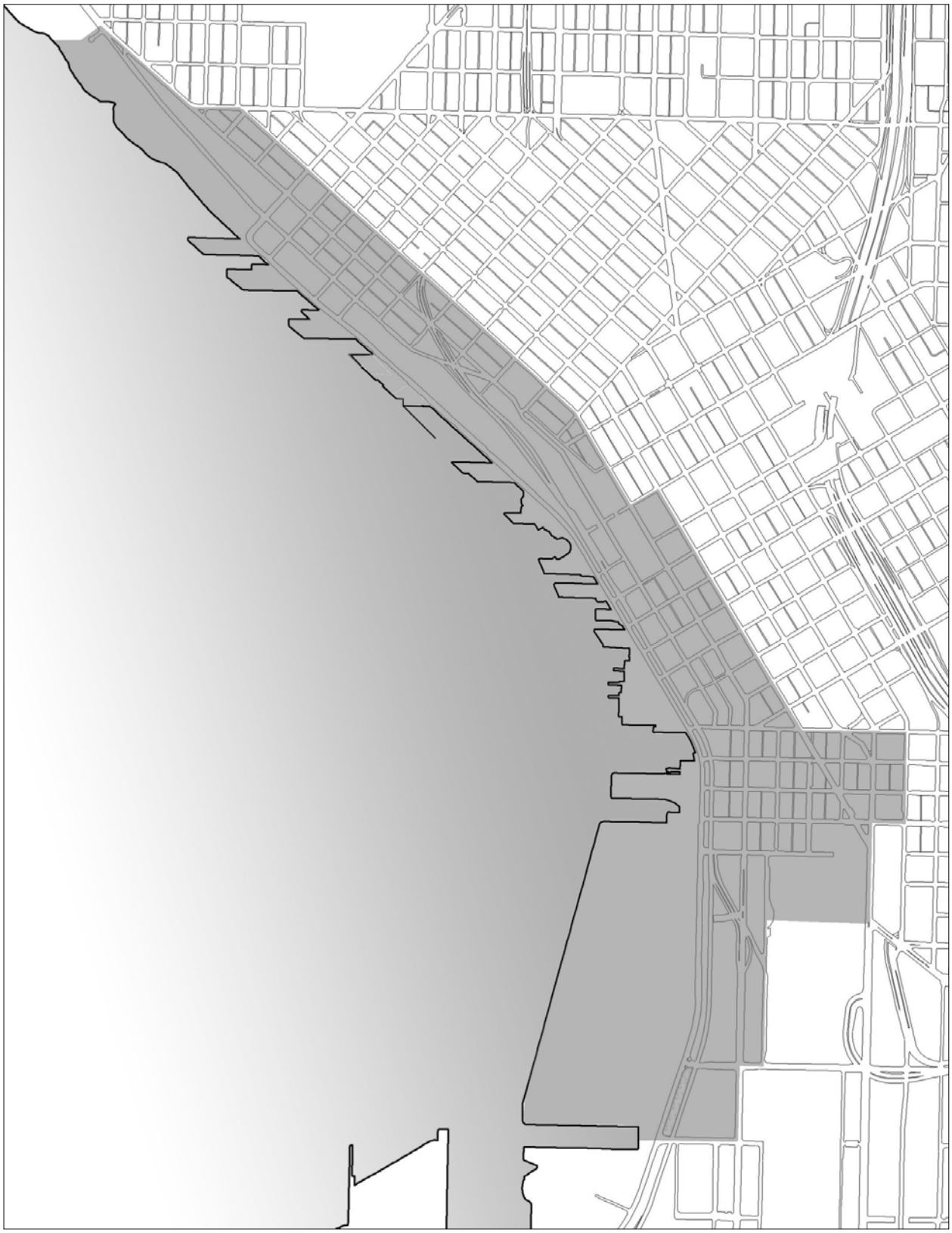
Central Waterfront Plan Background Report

Urban Design

Final Draft
November 2003

Department of Planning and Development
City of Seattle, Greg Nickels, Mayor
city design

Seattle's Central Waterfront Plan: Study Area



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Overview

Because of its setting and rich history, the Central Waterfront is perhaps Seattle's most dramatic location. It is the site of an ancient Native American settlement and the city's birthplace. Even in the course of Seattle's brief history, parts of the area have been rebuilt several times. With its current collection of piers, pier sheds and old warehouse structures, the area possesses a distinctive urban form and development pattern reflecting past functions. The arrival and departure of ferries, the presence of trains and trolleys, and the steady stream of traffic on the viaduct lends the area a kinetic character. The area is proximate to downtown, yet feels removed. It is a place of transitions—the transition between water and land, the natural and built environment, the open quiet of the bay and the bustle and congestion of the city, the more modest, fine-grained development from a century ago and the modern skyscraper city.

The identity of the area is shaped by these qualities, in addition to other physical characteristics, including the topography, the design and massing of buildings, the network of streets, the views in and out of the area, and the patterns of activity that occur here. Recognizing what defines the existing character of the Central Waterfront is the first step to determining what essential qualities need to be retained or enhanced, and how the area can be artfully adapted to meet the future needs of Seattle.

Historic Development

The Evolving Waterfront

The shape and character of Seattle's Central Waterfront evolved in response to the demands of the many different functions occurring there over time. Since Seattle's founding in 1852, the area has undergone dramatic physical changes as well as evolutions in its principal uses. The process continues today. Understanding how changing functions have shaped the waterfront provides a better understanding of the existing environment, and offers insight into how the area might continue to adapt in the future to best serve the ever changing needs of the city and region.

1852 – 1880: Pioneer City

Between 1852 and 1880, Seattle's waterfront was transformed from a stretch of wilderness to a bustling industrial and transportation hub. The earliest known inhabitants of the area, the Duwamish Indians, established a winter village, known as Djidjiila'letch, at a bend in the shoreline near the present intersection of 1st Avenue and Yesler Way. The name Djidjiila'letch meant "little crossing over place." Seattle's founders chose this shoreline location for establishing the city in 1852 because it was better suited as a protected deep water harbor than the original landing site at Alki Beach. The location proved ideal for Seattle's early development as a lumber mill town; the waterfront

provided easy access to timber, which could be cut and skidded down the adjacent hillsides for processing and shipping at the shoreline.

During Seattle's early development, the waterfront not only served as the port, but also functioned as the city's manufacturing and industrial heart. In 1853, the territory's first steam sawmill, Yesler's Mill, began operation near present intersection of 1st Avenue and Yesler Way. Soon afterwards, Yesler's Wharf was built out into Elliott Bay, providing the initial base for Seattle's lumber, coal and flour industries and marine commerce and transportation. The long process of reshaping the natural shoreline began as waste from the mill, ballast from ships, and earth from numerous regrade projects began to push the shoreline westward from an original alignment that, south of University Street, roughly followed what is now Post Alley and 1st Avenue. Native Americans encamped at the newly filled areas of Ballast Island, a raised mound at the foot of Washington Street formed from material dumped off ships anchored nearby, and Ba'qbaqwab, located at the foot of Bell Street.

By the 1870's, railroads linked the waterfront to the region's coal mines, delivering fuel for ocean going steamships. The "mosquito fleet," a flotilla of private steamers and wooden vessels, plied the harbor, carrying passengers, mail and produce from outlying communities, establishing Seattle as the regional center of waterborne transportation.

The harbor developed a haphazard collection of irregularly shaped and crudely constructed wooden piers, piersheds, and trestles. The principal docks were located between Jackson Street and Yesler Way. Stretching northward along the shoreline were additional piers, warehouses, saw mills and coal bunkers, with shipbuilding on the beach between Bell and Blanchard Streets, bathing beaches near Pike Street, and, at the far north end in distant Belltown, a barrel factory on the site of the Olympic Sculpture Park.

1880 – 1900: Waterfront Boom

At the turn of the 19th century, Seattle experienced tremendous growth, shedding its past as a backwater pioneer mill town to become an international commercial and trading center. Nowhere in the city was this transformation more apparent than along the waterfront—the City's gateway to the outside world. Accommodating the railroads resulted in establishing the current shoreline edge, and most of the existing pier structures were built during this period.

A major reconfiguration of the waterfront occurred in 1885 with the construction of Railroad Avenue (now Alaskan Way) for use by the major rail lines connecting the port to the transcontinental rail network. Extending outside the high tide line, the entire 120 foot wide right-of-way was built on pilings over water, with the railroad tracks supported on wood trestles. Pier structures, also supported on pilings, were connected to land by the railroad trestles and wooden walkways, with the gap between gradually filled to establish the current shoreline edge.

In 1889, Seattle's Great Fire destroyed most of the downtown commercial district, including the waterfront. The fire occurred at a time of great economic vitality, and the harbor facilities were quickly rebuilt in the same haphazard fashion as before, although enlarged to accommodate four times their previous capacity. Colman Dock (Pier 52) became the home to the Mosquito Fleet, and developed into a major landmark and water transportation center, distinguished by its domed waiting room and famous clock tower.

By 1895, the three transcontinental railroads serving Seattle had acquired most of the waterfront piers. Each railroad operated its own facilities, and the competition between them resulted in the inefficient duplication of infrastructure—tracks, yards, depots and stations multiplied, creating chaotic conditions along Railway Avenue and further isolating the waterfront from the rest of the city.

At the close of the nineteenth century, the harbor facilities of the pioneer city were showing signs of obsolescence. The wooden finger piers built after the fire again lacked sufficient capacity to handle the increasing volumes of trade and were unable to accommodate the larger steamships now calling on Seattle. The discovery of gold in Alaska in 1897 and the ensuing Klondike gold rush was the catalyst for the dramatic transformation of the waterfront into a major international deep-water port accommodating major steamship lines for the Alaskan trade.

During this period, the pier structures were realigned to promote more orderly harbor operations. The sudden drop in depth of Elliott Bay made extending piers straight off the shoreline too costly. Extending them at an angle increased the available frontage for longer ships, while allowing the pier structures to remain within shallower water. The angled piers also accommodated the radius requirements of the rail spurs needed to connect them to the main rail lines along Railroad Avenue. In addition to the expansion and reconfiguration of the piers along the shoreline, areas immediately inland were developed to accommodate the warehouses, wholesalers, and other activities requiring rail access or needed to support growing waterfront activities.

The Klondike Gold Rush also provided further impetus to Seattle's shipbuilding industry. The Moran Brothers Company, later named the Seattle Construction and Dry Dock Company, began operation of a marine repair shop and shipyard on tidelands at the foot of South Charles Street, on what is now part of the Terminal 46 complex. The firm flourished during the Gold Rush boom, expanding onto several piers and undertaking major Navy contracts for steel-hulled vessels.

With the Gold Rush, Seattle became the established Gateway to Alaska. The resulting economic growth and development enhanced the city's trading position as a leading port of entry for goods from the Orient as well, with silk being one of the major and most valuable imports passing through Seattle up until the 1930s. During this period, and the years immediately following, most of Seattle's surviving wooden wharves were built.

Also built during this period, but since destroyed, were the famous Coleman Dock and the Grand Trunk Terminal, with their elaborate domes and clock towers.

1900 – 1930: Maturing Waterfront

With major public improvements spurring continued growth and development, the commercial and trade function of the Central Waterfront peaked during the first two decades of the 20th century, while port facilities also expanded north to Interbay and south to Harbor Island.

The re-routing of rail passenger traffic through a tunnel constructed in 1905 underneath the downtown business district helped relieve waterfront rail congestion. The tunnel also led to the construction of new passenger terminals at King Street, replacing the original terminal that had operated on the waterfront at the foot of Columbia Street. Since access to the tunnel was not available to all railway companies, the waterfront corridor remained congested. The combination of heavy rail traffic, and the warehousing and manufacturing activity attracted to the area because of available rail access, further isolated the waterfront from the rest of the city.

The shoreline became more permanently fixed with the construction of the sea wall. Built in two phases, the existing seawall from Washington Street to Madison Street was constructed between 1909 and 1917, with the Railroad Avenue area behind the wall filled in with earth from the regarding of Jackson Street through the International District.

In 1911, voters approved the creation of a Port Commission to oversee orderly development and management of the County's harbors and waterways—partly to counter the railroads' control of the waterfront and address the chaotic conditions existing there. Under a comprehensive general plan for improvements, the Commission purchased piers to develop a public port to ensure that small shippers would have access to wharfage and warehouse space, which the railroads otherwise controlled. Other Port improvements included the construction of the Bell Street Terminal (Pier 66), completed in 1913, and the purchase and operation of a West Seattle Ferry at the foot of Marion Street.

Under the Port Commission's direction, much of the flood plain of the Duwamish River beyond the Central Waterfront was filled with earth from the city's regarded areas, and the east and west waterways were dredged to provide water access to shipping facilities and industrial sites to the south. In 1916, similar improvements were made further north to expand harbor facilities at Interbay's Smith Cove.

In 1915, Seattle's first waterfront park was developed by the Port of Seattle on the roof of the Bell Street Terminal, and included a solarium, salt water pool, and children's play area. The park was closed in the 1920's because of its reputation for attracting undesirable characters. New structures were also built along the waterfront during this period, including the Canadian Pacific freight and passenger terminal at Pier 64 and, in the 1930's, the reinforced concrete American Can Company terminal at Pier 69.

1930 – 1970: Decline and Transition

The importance of the Central Waterfront diminished with the decline of passenger carriers and the use of larger cargo ships that could no longer be accommodated there. By the end of the 1920s, a variety of factors -- labor troubles, world economics, maritime legislation, changing technology, control of property, the increasing intensity of development in adjacent areas, and severe topography-- contributed to the decline and shift of maritime activity away from the Central Waterfront.

The golden age of the Mosquito Fleet was over; by the 1930's, private automobile ferries had replaced nearly all the steamboats of the fleet, requiring a complete reconstruction of Colman Dock to handle auto and truck traffic. The old landmark terminal with its clock tower was demolished and replaced in 1937. The replacement, similar to today's terminal, although smaller, only had a single-lane entry that was too small to accommodate big trucks, so quickly became obsolete. Ultimately, the Washington State Ferries acquired the ferry system in 1951, followed by the purchase of Colman Dock in 1952. In 1966 the current terminal was completed. Although dramatically different in its operations, the existing ferry system represents one of the few activities remaining at essentially the same location throughout most of the waterfront's history.

Passage of ht Maritime Act in 1936 set new, more rigid standards for passenger vessels. Several passenger lines calling at the Central Waterfront ceased operation because they were unwilling or unable to meet the new standards.

The final stage of the seawall construction was completed in 1936, extending the seawall north to Broad Street. The project not only included the building o f the seawall, but also the conversion of Railroad Avenue from a series of piling-structured trestles to a filled concreted paved street now known as Alaskan Way. The right-of-way improvements allowed for safer and more convenient vehicular and pedestrian movement, wider sidewalks, and the relocation of power poles and remaining railroad tracks to the eastern half of the right-of-way.

By the 1930's, increasing automobile use prompted the study of proposals to reduce congestion and improve access to downtown by shifting north/south through traffic from 4th Avenue to an elevated, six lane, "monumental" boulevard along the waterfront. This proposal later materialized as the Alaskan Way Viaduct. The first link of Viaduct opened in 1953, followed by the connection to Aurora Avenue through the Battery Street tunnel in 1954. Originally conceived as a through-route, no ramp connections were built to downtown, but were later added in the 1960's. While regarded as a successful achievement in its day, the two-tiered structure further blighted the waterfront area and reinforced the barrier to public access initially created by the railroads.

As shifts occurred in technology and transportation, and as containerization eclipsed break-bulk cargo handling in the 1950s, the downtown waterfront lost its identity as a

place of work and industry. In the 1960s and early 1970s, the future of port operations on the central waterfront was uncertain. Passenger travel by ferry remained active, but cargo handling activity began shifting to the south, and fishing activity relocated to the north. Waterborne freight terminals and fish processing facilities continued to occupy some piers, while "back-up" space occupied by warehouses and wholesale facilities serving these activities remained in some upland areas.

The continued decline of maritime trade and commerce on the Central Waterfront also resulted in a shift of long held values about the area's role in the city. Quality of life and community identity increasingly were seen to be equally as important as manufacturing and industrial development to the economic health and attraction of the region. As this perspective gained ground, views of the waterfront as an amenity and recreational resource began to develop an increasingly significant constituency within the city.

This change in perspective on the waterfront's role may have been reinforced by the Seattle Worlds Fair. During the Fair, a number of ships moored at waterfront piers temporarily served as floating hotels and restaurants for fair visitors. Also, the Edgewater Inn occupied a vacant pier to provide accommodations. With the declining state of the waterfront coinciding with a new vision for Seattle fostered by the 1962 World's Fair, the prospect of a tourist commercial waterfront began to take hold. Subsequent plans explored this new orientation for the waterfront area. The 1963 Comprehensive Plan for the Central Business District and the 1965 John Graham Waterfront Plan identified objectives for Central Waterfront redevelopment, including the desire to establish for Seattle's citizens a strong orientation to the waterfront. Public open space, combined with commercial activities, were identified as key to revitalizing the declining and underutilized waterfront.

Several design studies following these plans, including the 1973 "Rockrise Report" and the 1978 "Alaskan Way Seawall and Promenade Guide Plan." Among the proposals for the Central Waterfront was a 19 acre planned redevelopment encompassing ten piers from the Colman Ferry Dock to Pier 66, to be implemented collaboratively by private owners, the City, and Port Authority. To realize the waterfront's potential as a public amenity and major tourist attraction, staged improvements would include a floating breakwater and small boat marina, motels, restaurants, shops, a new passenger steamship terminal for the Canadian Pacific Railway, an expanded commuter ferry terminal, historic seaport, a heliport, and an aquarium -- all linked by a pedestrian promenade. A moving sidewalk on an elevated overpass would strengthen the link with the Pike Place Market, and a waterfront site was to be made available for a world trade center symbolizing the city's role as "Gateway to the Orient."

1970 – 1990: Public Investment and Redevelopment

By the 1970's, the widespread introduction of containerization had shifted most port activity to the mouth of the Duwamish River, where the Port was developing facilities specifically designed for container handling. Except for Terminal 46 at the far south

end, the Central Waterfront lacked sufficient usable upland area to support modern marine container terminals.

While throughout its history, the waterfront supported diverse industries, by the 1970's, industrial activity also dwindled, with fish processing the primary holdout. Changes in the fishing industry, with much of the processing occurring offshore aboard ship or at other locations, however, continued to diminish the demand for waterfront space. Shipbuilding, on the decline since the close of World War II, enjoyed a resurgence in the 1970s, but the activity had shifted to the Todd and Lockheed yards on Harbor Island. With the Port's development of container cargo facilities on Terminal 46, the last trace of this industry also vanished from the Central Waterfront.

As port activity withdrew, several old piers and pier sheds were torn down and the areas they once occupied turned into parking lots or left as open water. Piers 60 and 61, built between the World Wars, were demolished in the 1970's, while Piers 56, 57, and 70 were privately redeveloped for tourist-oriented retail, restaurant and entertainment uses. Other piers were used for fish processing, cheap warehousing space, or remained vacant. The once active waterfront became underutilized, with pier structures remaining as vestiges of a by-gone era.

Amidst this decline in trade and industrial activity, several proposals for public improvements that were rooted in plans from the 1960's began to materialize. In 1974, Waterfront Park was developed between Piers 57 and 59, and in 1977 Piers 59 and 60 were redeveloped to house the Aquarium. In 1976, the City also developed Myrtle Edwards Park at the northern end of the Central Waterfront to create a linear park along Elliott Bay linking with Elliott Bay Park, 14 acres of additional shoreline open space owned by the Port. The Pike Street Hillclimb was built in 1977 to better link the waterfront with the Pike Place Market. Later, in 1982, the waterfront street car began operating along Alaskan Way, linking tourist attractions and public amenities between Myrtle Edwards Park and Pioneer Square.

Adjacent inland areas were also in transition. In 1982, Cornerstone Development renovated and constructed several buildings to accommodate a mix of uses, including housing, on six blocks bounded by 1st Avenue, Alaskan Way, Madison, and Seneca Streets. This project helped trigger the rehabilitation of the surrounding area, accelerating the shift from a warehouse/industrial district to a mixed use/commercial area

In the 1980's, Seattle again reexamined the future of the waterfront in the context of a major planning effort for the entire downtown area. The Downtown Land Use and Transportation Plan adopted in 1985 included regulatory changes and programmatic actions to guide future waterfront development. To further implement the Downtown Plan's proposals, a Harborfront Public Improvement Plan was prepared in 1987 for the 1.5 mile area along Alaskan Way between Pier 48 and Myrtle Edwards Park.

The 1985 Downtown Plan resulted in zoning changes for areas adjacent to the waterfront, promoting high density residential development along the Belltown edge where canneries and warehouses had once served waterfront uses. In general, the new zoning allowed a variety of uses, but limited the intensity of development to maintain a transition between the waterfront and downtown's more intensively developed inland areas.

In the late 1980's, a County open space bond issue for funds to implement proposed improvements in the Harborfront Plan, including a widened pedestrian promenade, recreational moorage, expansion of the Aquarium, and redesign of Waterfront Park, failed at the polls. Although the measures failed, the City was determined to achieve some of the key public improvements. North/south pedestrian connections were improved on the east side of Alaskan Way north of Pike Street. To improve public access to the waterfront and increase public open space in the area, the City acquired Piers 62 and 63 through a trade for Pier 57 to the south, with the City retaining public access around the Pier 57 apron. The trade allowed for the strengthening of the waterfront's "retail core" from Pier 57 to the south, while concentrating public ownership to the north. At the time, Piers 62 and 63 were viewed as a potential expansion site for the Aquarium, and another point of public access along the shoreline. In 1989, the City demolished the dilapidated pier sheds to accommodate public open space now used for summer concerts.

1990 – Present: New Opportunities

In recent years, the incremental implementation of public improvements outlined in the 1987 Harborfront Improvement Plan has continued—mostly in the northern end of the waterfront. The Port of Seattle has been another major player in carrying out the vision of the 1987 Plan. In the mid 1990's, the Port developed a cruise ship terminal, conference center, maritime museum, and public moorage at their former offices at Pier 66, and new Port headquarters and administrative offices are now located in the former America Can Company freight terminal at Pier 69. Now in its second year of operation, the Pier 66 terminal is homeport to two cruise ships, with one more to be added by 2004.

The disposition of some of the Port of Seattle's central waterfront properties in the 1990s also dramatically transformed the waterfront environment in the upland area between Pike and Bell Streets. Previously occupied by back-up warehouse space for waterfront freight handlers and fish processing activity, recent improvements on these properties include private development of office space (World Trade Center), a 320 room Marriott Hotel, and 234 units of housing in the Waterfront Upland project.

The development of Port properties resulted in several open space and public access improvements, including public open space at the Bell Street Pier and Bell Harbor Conference Center, a mechanical hillclimb at Lenora Street and a pedestrian bridge at Bell Street to improve pedestrian access between the north waterfront and the Belltown

and Pike Place Market, a bicycle and pedestrian trail on the east side of Alaskan Way, and expanded recreational moorage south of the Conference Center.

In 1999, the Seattle Art Museum and Trust for Public Lands purchased the abandoned 7.4 acre Union Oil (Unocal) Terminal site in Belltown north of Broad Street to develop a major public sculpture park with access to the shoreline.

Another recent transformation in upland areas has been the development of a substantial amount of housing. There are now concentrations of housing along the western edges of Belltown to the north and between the Pike Place Market and Pioneer Square in the Commercial Core to the south, where Harbor Steps, built in phases in the 1990s, has substantially increased the residential population in the area.

Furthermore, the growth of the high-technology sector in Seattle has created demand for non-conventional office sites with urban amenities. Several waterfront area buildings and properties have been recently converted to accommodate such high-tech uses, both on pier structures and in old warehouse buildings and other structures in upland areas.

Next Stage of Evolution

The Central Waterfront planning area continues to support activities at various stages of evolution; waterborne passenger transportation activities – ferries, tour boats, commercial moorage, cruise ship operations – remain strong, while cargo handling, fish processing and shipbuilding, once viable industries here, have moved on to other areas. Commercial, entertainment, tourist and recreational uses have a growing presence. New activities, like high tech businesses, have made an initial appearance, along with housing--now a more predominant use in some upland areas. Some uses in the area could only exist here and nowhere else, while others are more adaptable, and are drawn here because of special opportunities or amenities that favor a waterfront location over others.

Recent trends suggest that public uses, like the Aquarium, Sculpture Park, and other public open spaces will have an increasing influence on the future function and character of the area. Perhaps the most significant factor influencing the next stage of the Central Waterfront's future was the Nisqually earthquake of 2001 and the resulting damage that will require replacement of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and sea wall. Just as the railroads, and later the viaduct, reshaped and redirected the function of the Central Waterfront earlier in its history, rebuilding the viaduct and seawall creates the potential for a new direction in this century. The waterfront's historic isolation from the rest of downtown could change with the viaduct's reconstruction and the resulting shifts in the types of activities that may be drawn to the area. As pressure increases to absorb the Central Waterfront area into the larger pattern of downtown activity, the value of the area as a unique place with its own role and character needs to be given careful consideration.

Urban Form

Topography

Historically, topography has had a significant influence on conditions in the Central Waterfront, and will likely continue to affect the future urban form and character of the area. The glacially sculpted topography/bathymetry created the deep water conditions conducive to Seattle's early development as a port. The rapid depth of the bay, which drops quickly to 80 – 100 feet and deeper, influenced the angled, sawtooth pattern of the existing piers—the angled pattern increased wharf frontage while keeping pilings in shallower water. In an area of irregular topography, filling the tidelands created flat land that allowed for commercial and industrial expansion, and filling the thin stretch of beach and shallows at the base of bluffs along the shoreline accommodated the city's earliest transportation corridor.

Topographic conditions have also shaped development patterns defining the relationship between the Central Waterfront and neighboring areas. Where there were no topographic barriers, waterfront-related activities spilled over into adjacent upland areas. Elsewhere, the high bluffs along the waterfront's edge separated the area from the rest of downtown.

Shoreline

The shoreline portion of the study area – much of it artificially created through decades of landfill—is a flat, linear corridor of land running between the bay on the west and downtown's rapidly rising slopes on the east. This consistently level terrain unifies the area and has made it the logical path for movement. Only slightly above sea level, this area relates directly to the water and, for the most part, is separated from the rest of downtown by relatively steep slopes. Consequently, north/south movement is unconstrained by topography, while east/west movement is considerably more restricted. The area was essentially created to accommodate the transportation infrastructure needed to serve the port, and was the earliest part of the city to develop—primarily with activities seeking access to that infrastructure.

In some places, the flatter shoreline elevation extends further inland—most significantly around Pioneer Square, where filling the original tide flats created a relatively level area several blocks deep to the east. Jackson Hill was regarded in 1910, extending Jackson Street further eastward at a more level grade. Elsewhere, relatively level areas east of the shoreline are less deep -- the area between Pioneer Square and Seneca Street is relatively flat as far inland as Post Alley. From Pike Street to the northern edge of the study area, there is a relatively flat stretch of land about a half block deep east of Alaskan Way. While these inland extensions of level terrain have a similar topographic base, the Alaskan Way Viaduct physically separates most of them from the waterfront corridor, discouraging movement between shoreline and inland areas even where topography does not pose a barrier.

Inland Area

The landscape of the remainder of the study area was also radically altered through several regrades in the late 1800's and early 1900's, with much of the regraded earth used to fill submerged land along the shoreline. The most abrupt changes in topography occur along a bluff running from Pike to Bell Street, creating a strong edge separating shoreline development along Alaskan Way from upland activity in the Pike Place Market and southern end of Belltown. The western slope of this bluff is so steep that the nine east/west streets between Seneca and Blanchard Streets terminate at this topographic edge, requiring the use of stairs or other means to descend to the shoreline grade. North and south of the bluff, the rise of upland areas from the shoreline is less abrupt, allowing east/west streets to continue uninterrupted between the two areas.

Like the shoreline, the inland portion of the study area also has a linear north/south orientation. 1st and 2nd Avenues were among Seattle's earliest regarded thoroughfares, and the city's early growth followed these corridors northward from Pioneer Square once their grades were adjusted to accommodate commercial traffic. The steepness of the east/west slopes reinforces the linear character of 1st and 2nd Avenues--even though they are only a block apart, the development and activity patterns along the two thoroughfares are somewhat independent of each other because of the topographic separation.

Well into the 20th century, the regarded 1st Avenue, then later 2nd Avenue, served as Seattle's "main streets," with the major commercial buildings, hotels and department stores located along them. Even today, most of the structures lining 1st Avenue from Pioneer Square to the southern end of Belltown belong to the same development period between the late 19th and early 20th centuries, providing evidence of the rapid and unified development of this thoroughfare.

While less extreme than the east/west slopes, significant topographic changes do occur along the length of the north/south upland corridors. Along 1st Avenue, the topography rises gradually from the flatter terrain of Pioneer Square, with the steepness of the slope increasing north of Spring Street, up to the Pike Place Market. North of the market, the topography descends gradually through Belltown -- a result of the initial phase of the Denny Hill regrade in 1898, when 1st Avenue was cut through and paved from Pike Street to Denny Way.

The topography along 2nd Avenue follows a similar rise and fall going south to north, although the slopes are generally steeper. In the 1920s, 2nd Avenue was "straightened" to eliminate the jog at Yesler Way and extended axially across Pioneer Square's grid to directly connect the growing north end of downtown with the railway terminals at the south end. As the major downtown thoroughfare, 2nd Avenue was easily accessible to ferry and steamer passengers arriving at the waterfront and, with electric streetcar service boasting half-minute headways, provided access to other areas of the expanding city as well.

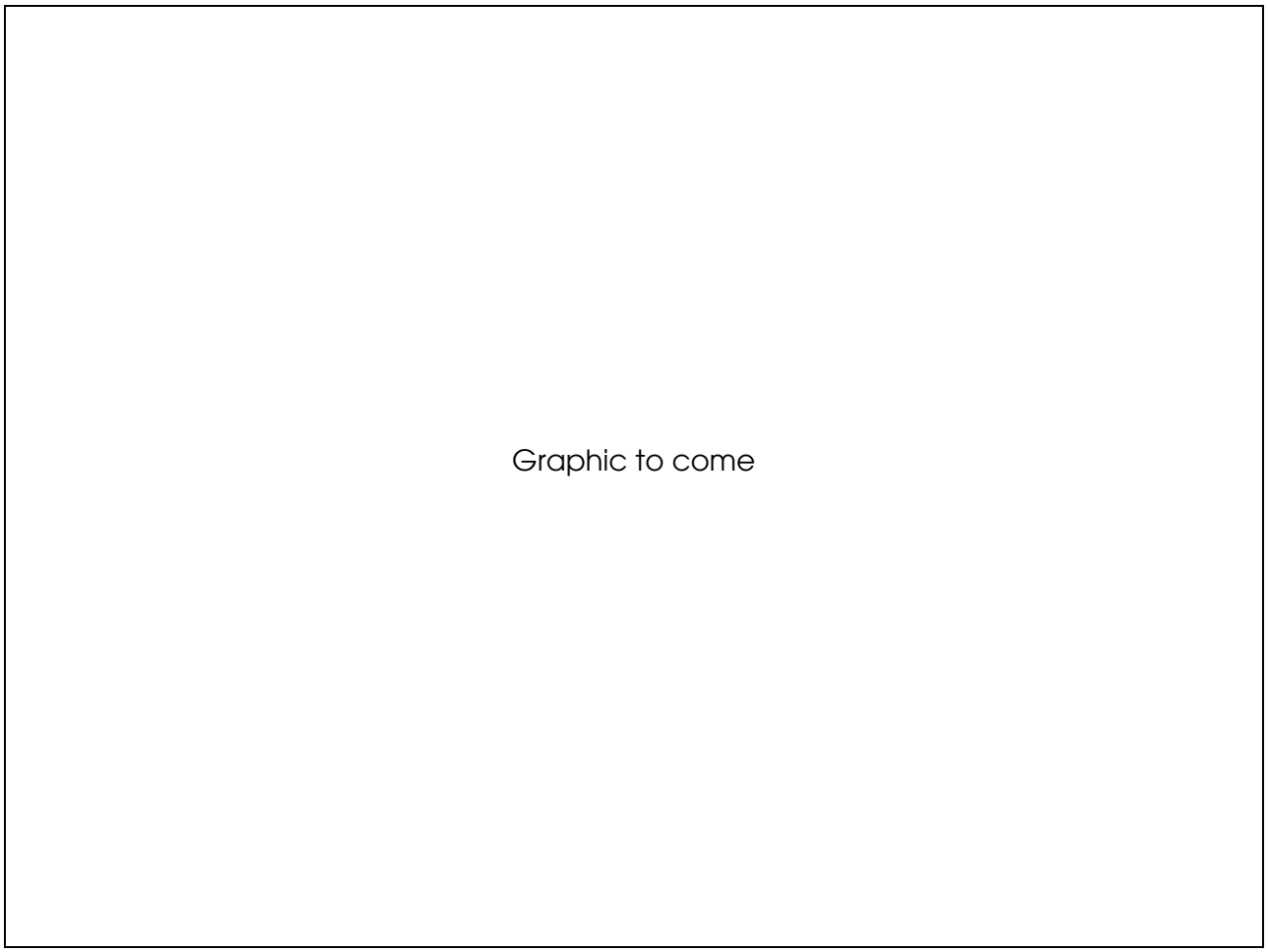

Figure 1. _____

Topographic conditions also dictated the alignment of several of the major thoroughfares providing access to the waterfront. At the northern end of the study area, Broad Street, initially platted as Lake Street, linked Lake Union with Elliott Bay through a trough between the higher elevations of Queen Anne Hill and Denny Hill, prior to its regrading. Westlake Avenue provides another connection between the Lake and Bay. This thoroughfare was extended diagonally across the downtown street grid from Denny Way to Pike Street in 1905, following an alignment through a valley previously used by a railway line for transporting coal from barges on Lake Union to coal bunkers at the foot of Pike Street.

Madison Street provided an early street car link to the waterfront, connecting the ferry landing on Lake Washington at Madison Park with a waterfront ferry terminal at the foot of Madison Street where service was provided to West Seattle. Jackson Street and Yesler Way both provided similar east/west connections across the city between the waterfront and Lake Washington.

Development Pattern

Platting

Superimposed on the natural topography, Seattle's street grid provides the principal framework for organizing the urban environment. In addition to providing access, the grid accommodated the uniform parceling of land for sale and development. The shoreline influenced several of the existing irregularities in the downtown grid pattern. Because the three major claimholders were unable to agree on a common baseline for platting the original townsite, the grid was ultimately laid out to follow three distinctive orientations reflecting the curve of the shoreline. The area south of Yesler Way was platted with streets oriented to the points of the compass, while the areas between Yesler Way and Stewart Street and between Stewart Street and Denny Way follow shifts in the direction of the shoreline. North of Denny Way, the grid once again is aligned with the compass.

While the grid pattern in most of downtown is generally uniform, along portions of the shoreline edge the pattern becomes more fragmented. Some of the irregularity is due to the abrupt change in topography, which breaks the continuity of streets connecting to the waterfront. There are also diagonal streets, some aligned to address the topography, that disrupt the grid and create irregular blocks. Examples include Armory Way/Alaskan Way Viaduct between Pike and Battery Streets, Elliott Avenue from Bell to Lenora Streets, and Railroad Way South. Several east/west streets do not continue through to the waterfront; Cedar, Battery, Eagle and Denny Way all terminate at Western Avenue, resulting in longer, "double" blocks along the waterfront's edge.

To accommodate industrial development and railroad operations in the south end of the study area, large parcels were assembled through the consolidation of blocks. Consequently, there is little trace of the more uniform grid pattern characteristic of the rest of downtown. Terminal 46 is the most extreme example of a large parcel in the study area. At over 80 acres, it could easily accommodate more than 40 blocks if it were platted with the same pattern of square blocks characteristic of other downtown areas. Another anomaly in the waterfront grid is the small block sizes. The blocks immediately east of Alaskan Way are essentially half the depth of other downtown blocks and consequently are not platted with alleys. Even the more standard blocks further east are less deep than elsewhere downtown, with 108 feet the typical dimension of a half block, compared to 120 feet for the blocks closest to I-5.

The following are typical platting characteristics of the study area:

- **Street Rights-of-Way**
  Most east/west streets throughout the area are 66 feet wide. Exceptions include Broad Street (80 feet), Yesler Way (75 feet), and King, Dearborn and Royal Brougham Way (100 feet).

North/south street rights-of way have varying widths: Western and Elliott Avenues are typically 66 feet wide; 1st Avenue north of S. King Street is 84 feet wide, and 100 feet wide south of S. King Street. 2nd Avenue is 90 feet wide in the Commercial Core, and the width of Post Alley/Avenue ranges from 16 feet to 40 feet. Railroad Avenue has a width of 100 feet.

The width of Alaskan Way also varies along its length. The narrowest width is 109 feet between the Pike Street Hillclimb and Broad Street, increasing to 180 feet between Pike Street and Yesler Way. South of Yesler Way, the width is 160 feet to King Street, increasing to 190 feet further south. The existing Viaduct occupies 51 feet of the right-of-way from King Street to approximately the Pike Street Hillclimb, where it turns inland just past the Pike Place Market to connect with the Battery Street Tunnel.

Most alleys are 16 feet wide. Alley vacations are not common, although several recent residential projects in the Belltown portion of the study area have involved alley vacations. Other blocks with vacated alleys are located in the portion Commercial Core along 1st Avenue zoned DMC 240, as well as areas zoned industrial further south.

- **Block Dimensions**

  The length of blocks (north/south dimension) is typically 240 feet between S. King Street and University Street, and between Battery Street and Broad Street. Between University Street and Battery Street, and north of Broad Street, most blocks are 360 feet long.

  The depth of blocks (east/west dimension) ranges. North of the Market, blocks between Elliott and Western Avenues are from 120 to 150 feet. Typical blocks between Western and First Avenues are 256 feet deep, with half blocks of 120 feet separated by a 16 foot alley. Between 1st and 2nd Avenues, the depth decreases slightly to 244 feet, with a 120 foot deep half block along 1st Avenue, a 16 foot alley and a 108 foot deep half block along 2nd Avenue.

  South of the Market to Yesler Way, narrower blocks of 134 to 150 feet are between Alaskan Way and Western Avenue. The depth of blocks between Western and Post Alley is typically 100 feet, and 111 feet between Post Alley to 1st Avenue. From 1st to 2nd Avenues, the block depth is 235 feet, with a 111 foot half block along 1st Avenue, a 16 foot alley, and a 108 foot block depth along 2nd Avenue.

  Along the edge of Pioneer Square, blocks between Alaskan Way and S. King Street are 247 feet deep, with a 120 foot half block along Alaskan Way, a 16 foot alley, and a 111 foot block depth along 2nd Avenue. Typical blocks between 1st and Occidental Avenues are 238 feet deep, with half blocks of 111 feet separated by a 16 foot alley. South of S. King Street, the regular grid pattern gives way to large sites and "super blocks" created through street vacations. With the vacation of Charles and Plummer, the southernmost blocks of the study area have lengths of 1,000 feet or more.

- **Block Area**

  Depending on lot depth and including the area of the alley, the square blocks typically range in size from 56,400 square feet to 61,440 square feet, while the longer rectangular blocks are typically 88,920 square feet.

- **Parcel Size**

  Under the original platting, typical individual parcels were 60 feet wide, with depths ranging between 108 to 150 feet, depending on location. Consequently, the area of a typical parcel ranges between 6,480 to 9,000 square feet. However, most developed lots are two parcels or more in size. Generally, the largest parcels are in the far north and southern ends of the study area. These range from sites of just over an acre to over 80 acres (Terminal 46).

  The development pattern is influenced by the size of parcels and the development that occupies them. With multiple parcels developed on a block, the "grain" of the area is generally finer than many other downtown areas, where parcels have been consolidated into large sites—frequently a full block in size—and are often occupied by a single large building.

Development Character

The Central Waterfront study area has a great diversity of building types, reflecting the variety of functions accommodated there, both now and in the past. In many respects, the Central Waterfront is a transition area, and this applies to its development character as well. Here there is a transition between the city's earliest remaining development, and the modern skyscraper city further inland. This transition in the age of development also corresponds to a transition in the scale; the waterfront possesses a generally smaller scale and finer mix of development relative to the more recent and intensely developed downtown areas to the east.

Development Period

The Central Waterfront study area includes development that extends across most of the city's history. Some areas, such as Pioneer Square, are characterized by a consistency of development from one period; in this case, from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In the Belltown portion of the study area and the northern shoreline area between Pike and Wall Streets, most of the development has occurred in the last decade. While other areas have a mix of buildings from many periods, the 1st Avenue corridor has enough early development to give the thoroughfare an almost historic character from Pioneer Square to Belltown. Figure 2 illustrates the different time periods when the existing development in the study area occurred.

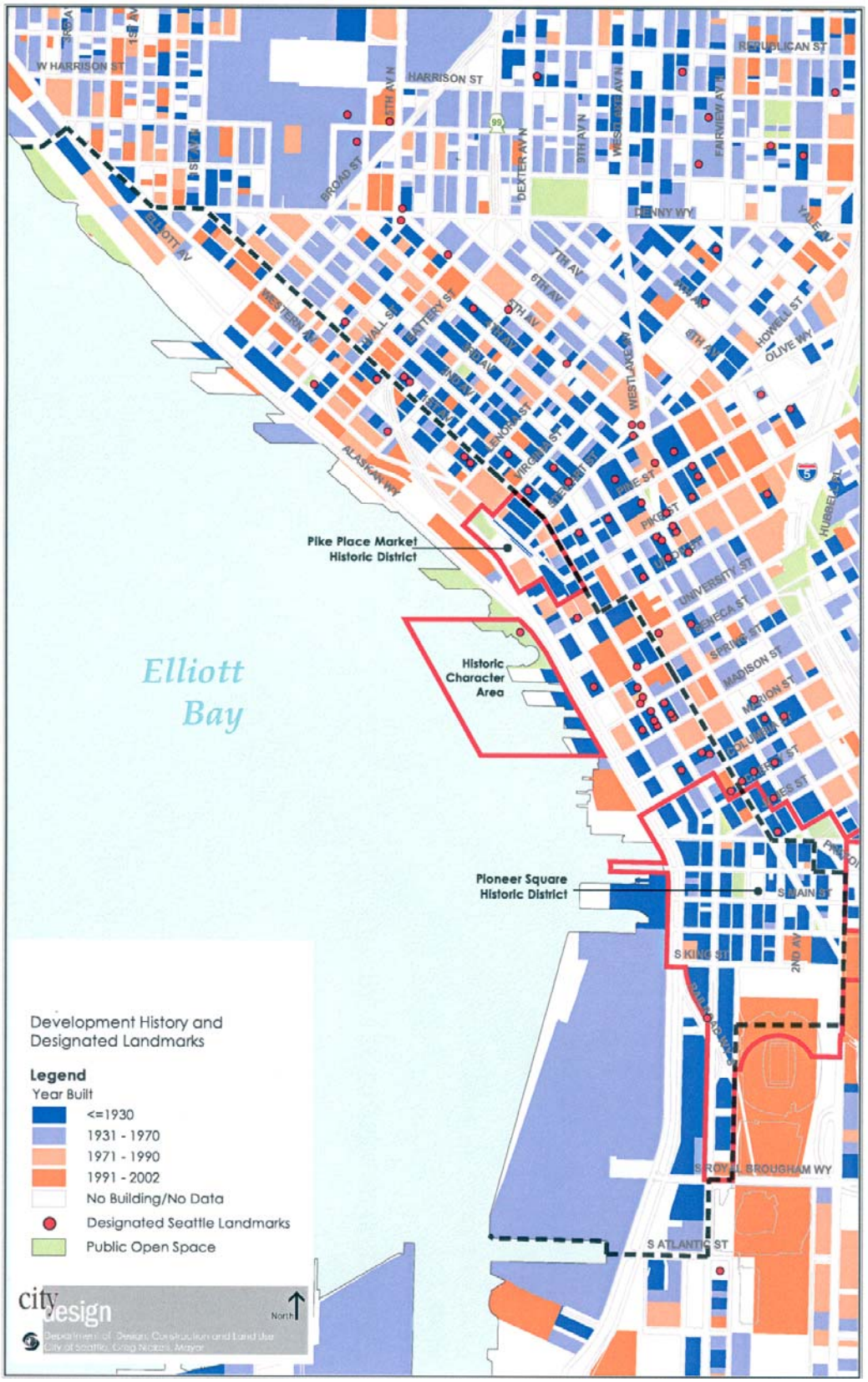

Figure 2. Development History and Designated Landmarks

Character Areas

With the evolution of the urban environment along the waterfront, areas with a more or less distinctive development character have emerged, and are described below:

- **Belltown**

  Residential structures predominate in the Belltown portion of the study area, and development ranges widely, from small, walk up apartment buildings to high-rise towers—with a variety of housing types in between. A grouping of older, turn-of-the 19th century brick commercial buildings and residential hotels extends along 1st Avenue. These structures, typically three to four stories in height and on lots of two parcels combined, establish a consistent scale and character for this part of Belltown. A seven block area east and south of the sculpture park site has almost been completely redeveloped over the last decade with new midrise housing projects on sites in the half-block to full block range. The pattern of upper floor setbacks is apparent in new development abutting east/west streets designated as view corridors west of 1st Avenue. While brick and masonry buildings once characterized the area, buildings of glass, concrete, synthetic stucco and other new materials are increasingly predominant.

- **Alaskan Way Corridor-Inland**

  The west side of the Alaskan Way corridor Between Pike and Broad Streets is uniformly lined with lower, bulkier structures, generally in the 60 to 85 foot height range, accommodating housing, office, hotel, parking and institutional uses. Most of these structures were built since 1985, with the old Skyway Luggage Building being a noticeable exception. Modern low, bulky office buildings continue this scale north of the sculpture park site into Uptown Queen Anne.

  To the south of Pike Street, the eastern edge of Alaskan Way is dominated by the structure of the Alaskan Way Viaduct, an element of uniform height (52.5') and a regular "rhythm" established by the consistent spacing of the structural supports (roughly every 70 feet). Today, the Viaduct has become an integral element of the image and identity of the waterfront. Just east of the viaduct, the backs of older, bulky masonry structures, with heights generally ranging between 30 and 140 feet, create a strong edge, with some "gaps" created by surface parking lots. For the most part, the structures along the Pioneer Square portion of this edge are lower in height and occupy smaller parcels. South of Railroad Way S., much of the area abutting Alaskan Way is vacant.

- **Alaskan Way Corridor-Shoreline**

  The character of shoreline structures varies. Clustered in the middle of the study area are the somewhat regularly spaced historic, wooden "finger piers." Further north are the wider pier structures occupied by such large-scale structures as the Port's new Bell Street cruise ship terminal at Pier 66 and their administrative headquarters in a converted fish cannery facility at Pier 69. Even the older pier

structures in the north end have been substantially renovated and have a more modern look. Most structures along the shoreline are between 40 and 50 feet in height, although the Port's facilities are as high as 60 feet. The southern end of the study area is dominated by the Washington State Ferry Terminal, a low structure of utilitarian design, the mass of Pier 48, and the expanse of Terminal 46, which, in addition to the huge orange gantry cranes, is often occupied by stacks of cargo containers.

- **1st Avenue Corridor**

  The 1st Avenue corridor overlaps with the Pioneer Square, Commercial Core, Pike Place Market and Belltown portions of the study area. Following the fire in 1889, the rebuilding of Pioneer Square and the regrading of 1st Avenue resulted in substantial growth along this corridor as far north as Belltown over a short time period. Consequently, structures in these areas shared similar materials, scale, and design. Many of these structures remain today, creating a fairly cohesive development pattern along 1st Avenue from Pioneer Square to Belltown. While there are numerous exceptions, the height of structures is generally between 40 and 100 feet, and brick is a frequently used material. Developed sites are commonly one or two lots in size, giving the corridor a finer grain and scale than more recently developed areas further inland. Larger development sites and structures occur, especially along the stretch through the Commercial Core, but they are not predominant.

Landmarks

Partly due to the downtown's historic development pattern, the study area has one of the greatest concentrations of landmark structures in the city. A major development cycle spanning the decades of the late 19th and early 20th centuries produced much of what currently exists along the waterfront and the 1st and 2nd Avenue corridors. Subsequent development cycles directed growth further inland, sparing the area from wholesale redevelopment. Remaining structures contribute significantly to the character of the area.

Portions of the Central Waterfront study area are within the boundaries of the Pioneer Square Preservation District and the Pike Place Market Historic District. Outside of the established historic districts, there is a significant concentration of landmark structures in the upland portion of the study area between Pioneer Square and the Pike Place Market along Western and 1st Avenues, and, to a somewhat lesser extent, along 1st Avenue in Belltown.

The historic and architectural resources within the study area include the designated Seattle Landmarks identified in Figure 3 and located in Figure 4, pages 3 and 4, respectively.

Most of the remaining waterfront piers were built between 1896 and 1930. Only one, Pier 59 (Seattle Aquarium), is designated a historic landmark structure, and many pier sheds have undergone substantial alterations since their construction. A "Historic Character Area" has been established in the shoreline regulations and includes the historic pier sheds between Pier 54 and Pier 59. Occasionally, historic vessels are moored at various waterfront piers, providing temporary exhibits of maritime history. Commemorative markers are also places along the waterfront to identify important historic events or features. In many respects, the area serves as a living museum of the city's maritime past.

Construction Types

Historic Overview. The following lists show the types of structures and architecture present as the waterfront developed.

- **Marine-Related**
  Original marine-related development consisted of piers, pier sheds, and terminals. Structures that were originally developed for one use have been readapted to serve a current function.

- **Industrial**
  Original development included warehouse structures and factories, most of which have been replaced or adapted to serve a current function.

- **Transportation**
  The viaduct dominates the transportation scene on the waterfront. Other transportation facilities include the Ferry Terminal at Colman Dock and the Bell Harbor Cruise Ship Terminal at Pier 66.

- **New Development**
  New waterfront development is predominantly commercial and residential.

- **Special Features**
  Past development on the waterfront included many special features, such as significant signs and clock towers.

Development Responses to Waterfront Conditions

Development on the waterfront reflects responses to a variety of conditions, including:

- Topography and other natural conditions
- Need for pedestrian and vehicular access
- Desire to preserve views
- Regulatory requirements, such as shoreline and base zoning regulations

Seattle Landmark	Address
Pioneer Square	
L.C. Smith Building (Smith Tower)* *(1)*	502-508 2nd Avenue
Commercial Core Uplands	
The Lyon Building* *(2)*	607 3rd Avenue
Holyoke Building *(3)*	107 Spring Street
The Hoge Building* *(4)*	705 2nd Avenue
The First Avenue Group* • The National Building *(5)* • Grand Pacific *(6)* • Colonial Hotel *(7)* • Hotel Cecil *(8)* • Beebe Building *(9)* • Globe Building *(10)* • Colman Building *(11)*	 1006-1024 Western Avenue 1115-1117 1st Avenue 1110-1123 1st Avenue 1019-1023 1st Avenue 1013 1st Avenue 1001-1011 1st Avenue 94-96 Spring Street
Pier 59/Seattle Aquarium *(12)*	Alaskan Way
Colman Building *(13)*	801-821 1st Avenue
Dexter Horton Building *(14)*	710 2nd Avenue
84 Union Building/U.S. Immigration Building *(15)*	84 Union Street
Olympic Warehouse and Cold Storage Building *(16)*	1203-07 Western Avenue
Bank of California Building (Puget Sound Bank) *(17)*	815 2nd Avenue
Exchange Building* *(18)*	821 2nd Avenue
Belltown Uplands	
Guiry Hotel* *(19)*	2101-2105 1st Avenue
Schillestad Building *(20)*	2111 1st Avenue
P-Patch cottages *(21)*	2512 Elliott Avenue
Terminal Sales Building* *(22)*	1932 1st Avenue
Oregon *(23)*	2301 1st Avenue
Barnes Building* *(24)*	2320 1st Avenue
Bell Building* *(25)*	2326 1st Avenue
Hull Building* *(26)*	2401-05 1st Avenue
New Pacific Apartment Building *(27)*	2600-04 1st Avenue
Seattle Empire Laundry Building *(28)*	2301 Western Avenue/66 Bell Street
National Register Sites not also designated as Seattle Landmarks	
Washington Street Boat Landing Pergola** *(29)*	
Federal Office Building *(30)*	901 1st Avenue (Commercial Core)

** SEPA view protected landmarks*

*** originally erected in 1920 to the southeast of the present site.*

Figure 3. Designated Landmarks

Graphic to come

Figure 4. Locations of Seattle Landmark

Connection and Integration

An important consideration in the redevelopment of the Central Waterfront is maintaining and enhancing its connectivity—providing access to the waterfront from adjacent neighborhoods as well as improving the pedestrian environment along the waterfront itself. In this regard, the following must be given special attention:

- Providing pedestrian accessibility
- Eliminating barriers to and on the waterfront

Public Realm

Much of the Central Waterfront is publicly owned. (Figure 5.) Redeveloping the waterfront will require that the following topics be addressed:

- Public rights-of-way
- Streetscape elements/landscaping
- Open spaces
- Public buildings
- Public access easements

Views

Framework

Shoreline Environment. Along the water's edge, the visual relationship with the bay changes by area. South of Jackson Street, the flat topography and depth and expanse of Terminal 46 distances the viewer from the water, which is rarely seen due to the presence of stacked cargo containers. Further north, the Washington State Ferry Terminal is set amidst a vast sea of parking, adding little to the quality of views from Alaskan Way and failing to create an appropriate gateway, as it should, to the city and the bay.[1] North of the Ferry Terminal, Piers 54 to 59 maintain the historic character of the waterfront, but limit views to the bay to relatively narrow "windows" between piers. Because of the angular orientation of the piers, several of the piersheds encroach into the view corridors aligned with inland east/west streets, obstructing the views to the bay from these streets.

Views to the bay open up considerably in the area around the Seattle Aquarium and to the north, where the spacing between piers is greater and several existing piers have been reconfigured to accommodate new activities and increased public access. Public viewing areas have been built at the Bell Street Pier, both on the pier deck and

[1] ROMA, p. 40, 41.

Figure 5. Public Use and Cultural Resources

the roof. To the north of this area, Myrtle Edwards Park contrasts the hardscape of the downtown waterfront environment with a green, open landscape along the shoreline. Here, there is also a transition in the shoreline edge from the more urban character of the sea wall to a rockery embankment that slopes more gradually to the water.

The crescent shape of the shoreline also creates interesting view opportunities along Alaskan Way. From various vantage points, the shoreline's curve affords views across the bay to the opposite end of the Central Waterfront and beyond. The "bends" in Alaskan Way at Pike Street and S. Washington Street are also highly visible because they terminate the line of view for those traveling on the street. This condition makes structures in the line of view appear prominent, and creates special opportunities for landmarks.

Inland Environment. Visual access to the waterfront extends far inland—well beyond the boundaries of the study area. Consequently, there is an opportunity for people to experience the waterfront, at least visually, while being quite some distance away. The extent of the visual "reach" of the waterfront is a factor of topography, street right-of-way orientation, and development conditions.

Since east/west streets in downtown are sloped toward the waterfront and are oriented perpendicularly to it, they play an especially important role in establishing the quality of the public realm and providing visual access to Elliott Bay. In recognition of the important role that streets play in opening up the city to its larger environment, the City has developed view protection policies and requires buildings to set back the upper floors on certain east/west streets to open up views to the bay.

Views of the bay and distant horizons from east/west streets extend beyond downtown, up into the First Hill and, along some streets, Capitol Hill neighborhoods. Similarly, north/south streets on the slopes and some flatter areas of Queen Anne provide views down to Elliott Bay, and the bay and downtown waterfront is visible from West Seattle and the higher elevations of Beacon Hill to the south. Along some thoroughfares, like S. Jackson Street, Elliott Bay can be seen from higher elevations quite some distance from downtown.

Figure 6 below identifies areas that provide some visual contact with Elliott Bay and/or the landforms beyond, expanding the presence of the waterfront to outlying areas. These areas are further broken down into view zones based on the quality of the waterfront view.

Graphic to come

Figure 6. Visual Access Zones

Within and adjacent to downtown, there are spectacular views to the waterfront from inside the cluster of highrise buildings, but broad and unobstructed views to the harbor from public places are fairly limited. As a result, views from public parks are carefully protected by City policy. Notable among these is Steinbrueck Park, which gives a 160-degree view of the entire harbor, the working waterfront to the south, and the distant mountains of the Olympic Range.[2]

Alaskan Way Viaduct. The Alaskan Way Viaduct is designated as a scenic route and because of its elevation provides commanding views of the profile of the city and Elliott Bay from the upper deck when driving north. Southbound, the views are limited by the structure itself. While the Viaduct does offer fleeting views of the city skyline, Elliott Bay, and the Olympic Mountain range, it dramatically alters the character of the waterfront environment and the quality of the visual experience at grade within the city.[3]

As an elevated structure, the Viaduct blocks inland views to the bay on lands that are within 30 – 80 foot contours. Over 80 feet, on e can often see over the Viaduct to Elliott Bay and distant horizons, and under 30 feet, one can see under the Viaduct—although these views are often in between supporting columns and across a darkened zone shaded by the overhead structure.

[2] ROMA, p. 42.
[3] ROMA, p. 42

View Opportunities

In addition to the aesthetic enjoyment derived from views of Seattle's natural setting, landmarks and memorable scenes provide visual cues that help orient people in an area. While more intensive development in upland areas continues to diminish available views of Elliott Bay, dramatic views remain, and there will likely be new opportunities to exploit them. For example, removal of the Alaskan Way Viaduct structure will enhance views from many existing view corridors and could potentially create new view corridors on rights-of-way like Railroad Way, now occupied by an elevated ramp structure. Redevelopment of Terminal 46, expansion of the Ferry Terminal, development of the Olympic Sculpture Park, and the future use of Pier 48 and other over-water structures also present opportunities to enhance views.

Topographic conditions, changes in the orientation of street rights-of-way, and shifts in the street grid also create opportunities for enhancing view conditions. These opportunity areas are shown in Figure __. One opportunity is created by the "bends" in the Alaskan Way surface street, which bends at two locations in the study area. Not only do these bends allow views out over the water at certain locations, but the views down the thoroughfare terminate at these "joints," creating highly visible and potentially dramatic locations. Changes on waterfront lots could result in new vistas down certain streets, such as King Street, which today only has views of structures at Terminal 46. Changes in topography have created overlook areas at the ends of streets where viewing conditions could be enhanced. One example is Battery Street at 1st Avenue above the tunnel entrance of SR 99, which the Belltown community has identified as an area to improve as a viewpoint. Because of the topographic change, the open swath created by the SR 99 right-of-way, and the low scale of adjacent development, this area has an expansive view of the bay and landforms beyond.

View Protection Provisions

The City protects view resources through a variety of mechanisms, including SEPA environmental policies and procedures, regulations in the Seattle Land Use Code, street vacation policies, and guidelines applied to new development on a project-by-project basis. These mechanisms are summarized below.

- **State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)**
  Seattle's environmental legislation, Seattle Municipal Code, Chapter 25.05, Environmental Protection (SEPA), establishes the ability for the City to require alteration of a project to mitigate negative effects on public views or vistas. SEPA authority with regard to view protection is addressed Section 25.05.675 P.

  The policy for view protection is divided into two parts. The first addresses views from locations identified in an attachment to the section, which are protected to the extent that measures can be taken to address the impact of new development that could obscure views of natural features or the downtown skyline. These locations include specified public viewpoints, which are generally public parks, and scenic

Graphic to Come

Figure 7. View Opportunity Areas

Graphic to Come

Figure 8. Scenic Route Segments with Views Toward Downtown

routes. The second part addresses circumstances where views of certain designated City landmarks meeting a particular criterion related to their visual prominence would be obscured, essentially from any public place.

Scenic Routes. SEPA policies include a map of the city's scenic route network, and call for an assessment of the potential impacts of development on views from these routes. At least some portion of seven routes – the Alaskan Way Viaduct, Alaskan Way, Elliott Avenue, Denny Way, Yesler Way, S. Jackson Street, and S. Royal Brougham Way – are located in the study area. Other routes, including 5th Avenue, Interstate 5, and Westlake Avenue, are in adjacent downtown areas. (Figure 8.) Consideration is to be given to the potential impact of development along these routes on views of the downtown skyline, bodies of water, and mountains.

View Sites. The SEPA policies identify 86 view sites, mostly public parks and viewpoints, that are to be considered when assessing a projects potential impacts on views. Three of these sites -- Waterfront Park (Pier 57), Victor Steinbrueck Park, and Myrtle Edwards Park -- are located in the study area. Another five sites -- Kerry Park, Kobe Terrace Park, Kinnear Park, Dr. Jose Rizal Park, and Harborview Hospital Viewpoint -- are located further upland and provide at least some views across the study area of Elliott Bay/Puget Sound and/or the Olympic Mountains beyond. Admiral Viewpoint, Alki Beach Park, Hamilton Viewpoint Park, Seacrest Park, Smith Cove Park provide more distant views of the study area from across Elliott Bay. At least four other view sites have some view distant and secondary views of Elliott Bay in the vicinity of the study area.

View-Protected Landmarks. SEPA policies call for protecting views of certain designated Seattle Landmarks that meet specific designation criteria regarding their visual prominence. Fifteen of these structures are located in the study area and are identified in Figures 3 and 4 above.

- **Land Use Code**

  View Corridors. Certain downtown streets are designated as view corridors, and the Downtown Land Use Code identifies segments of these view corridors where the upper floors of development on abutting property must set back from the street property line. (Figure 9.) Portions of designated view corridors requiring setbacks include:

  - Bell, Battery, Wall, Vine, Clay, and Broad Streets west of 1st Avenue.
  - Marion, Madison, Spring, Seneca, and University Streets west of 3rd Avenue.

  Shoreline View Corridors. Developments on all waterfront lots in shoreline environments in the study area are required to provide unobstructed view corridors. Generally, these view corridors are associated with areas provided to meet public access requirements. They are typically aligned with the angles of the pier structures and are not necessarily integrated into the upland view corridors along east/west streets, which run perpendicular to the shoreline.

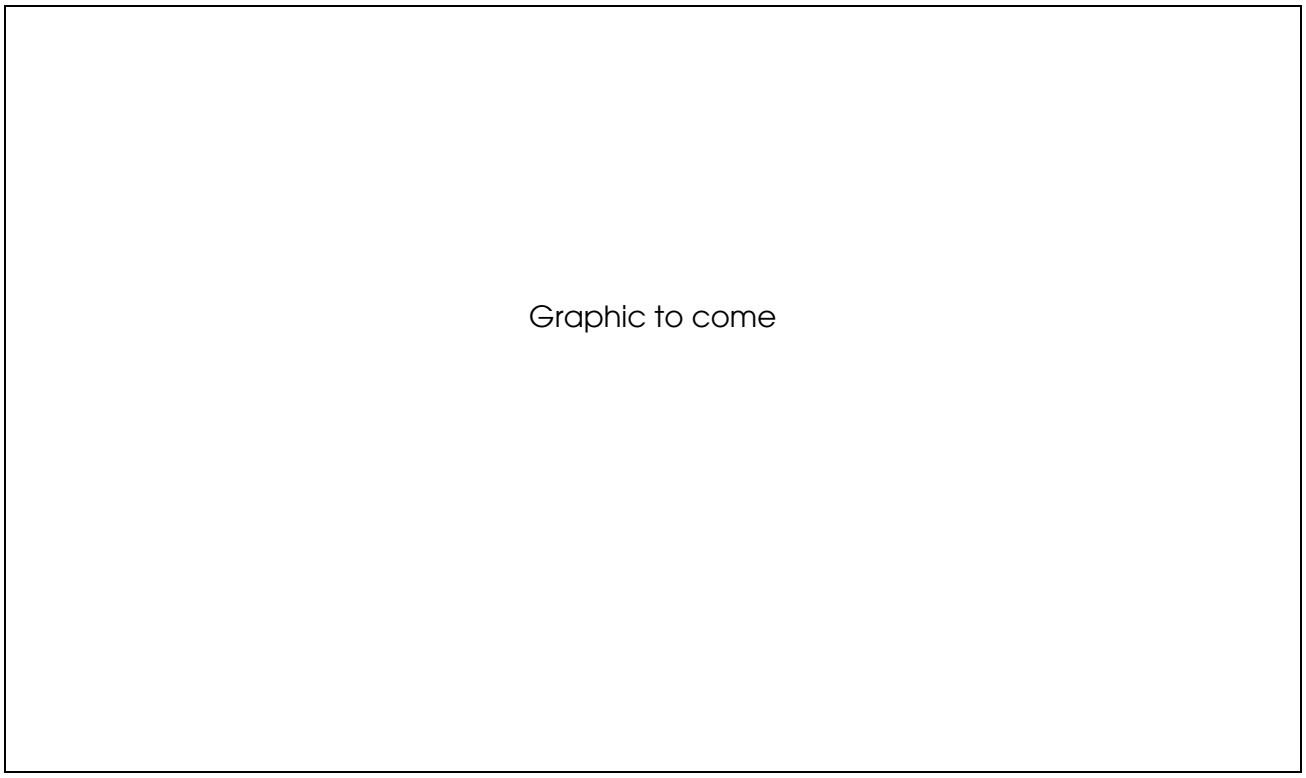

Figure 9. View Corridors

Special Provisions. Some special provisions have been incorporated into the Land Use Code to address view issues. In the northern portion of the study area, the Industrial Commercial (IC) 45 zone includes a height incentive for projects that provide view corridors. Under this provision, an increase in the height limit from 45 feet to 65 feet is allowed if a view corridor is provided on the site to permit views from Elliott Avenue to Puget Sound.

Art

This section is being developed. It will include information on the following topics:

- Commercial "art," including signs
- Public art
- A map of public art inventory

Synthesis

This section is under development. It will include the following topics:

- Special places defining the spirit of the waterfront: "genius loci"
- Landmarks
- Crossroads, access points, and gathering places
- Viewpoints and high-visibility areas
- Sunny spots and protected places
- Water connections
- Events and locations of important events
- Memories from the past; other past visions for the future

Issues

To be developed

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